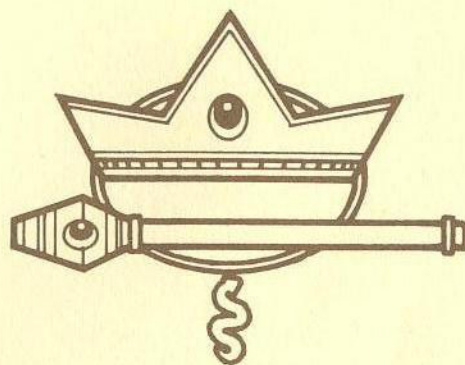




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The Book of Lore



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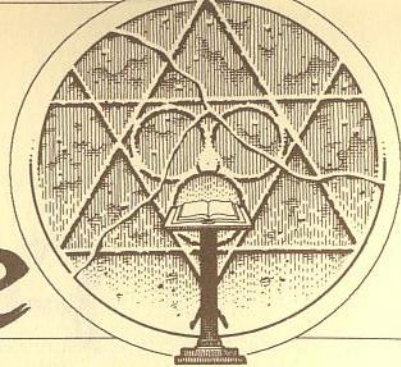


Foreword

The Book of Lore was commissioned by Lord British, at the dawn of the Fifth Age, as a compendium of common knowledge to this date. Its inspiration is the great prosperity and progress that has come about as a result of the defeat of the Triad of Evil and the rise of the Avatar ethic. Its purpose is to keep alive our understanding of the past and the present as safeguards for a bright future. The book also serves as a guide for youth and other travelers throughout Britannia.

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Folklore



Long before the ascendance to power of Lord British, Sosaria, as it was then known, was made up of numerous citystates. The eight largest and most enduring of these are today the eight leading townes in Britannia.

Each citystate had its own ruler and some semblance of laws. However, there was constant bickering for power and resources, which meant that the smaller states often fell prey to the aggressions of the larger.

The Crossing.

During this time, in another world, an idealistic youth was growing discouraged. All around him, he saw people pursuing personal wealth and power. Where were the heroes fighting for justice and prosperity for all people? Was there no leader willing to seek the way to a better world for everyone?

The youth took to spending his days roaming the hills. One autumn day, he came upon a rock-bordered clearing surrounded by towering oaks. From a bed of dry leaves, the glint of metal caught his eye. It was a silver medallion in the shape of a great serpent. In his hand, the medallion felt unusually warm.

Suddenly a line of blue light rose from the leaves, expanding into a door of shimmering light. The youth stared, astonished, then stepped through.

The door disappeared and autumn with it. Green fields now surrounded the youth. Feeling the medallion still in his hand, the youth slipped it into his pocket. He detected a wisp of smoke rising above a grove of trees in the distance, and headed towards it. There he surprised a slender, blond man chopping wood. As the man looked up, the axe struck the wood awkwardly, glanced off, and opened a gash in his leatherclad leg.

The youth rushed forward to help but the man put his hand up. Concentration replaced the pain that had flashed across his face. He knelt, touching his injured leg with one hand, tracing intricate patterns in the air with his other, and softly murmured. The bleeding stopped.

The man stood up, brushing woodchips from his clothes. He smiled broadly at the youth's amazement, then spoke with a deep voice.

"Aye mek mye leg feelle na panne, and aye haellede it, too. Aye ought ha' kwit myne axynge. But aye dinna ken thou'rt icumen.

The youth's eyes grew huge. He actually understood this strange, new language. "But how did you heal your leg?"

The man's eye's twinkled. "Why, 'tis th' simplest of spellles. Nay?"

The man's name was Shamino. That night, the youth stayed in Shamino's house. The youth told Shamino about the land from which he came. Shamino could not fathom such a land, but believed the lad was sincere and telling the truth.

"What again was the name of thy birthplace?"

"Cambridge," the youth replied, "in the British Isles."

Shamino thought for a minute, "I like that. I shall call thee British."

The youth laughed, but accepted his new name.

Initially, British looked diligently for a way to return to his homeland, but over time his need to return to his own people lessened. It was only after he gave up looking for a way back that he discovered one. British made the journey several times. In fact, it's believed he brought back close friends to dwell with him in his chosen world—Iolo the Bard and the knight Dupre are almost certainly his landsmen. Among the evidence of this is the aging process. It appears that a decade in our world is equivalent to a single year in the homeland of British. He and his countrymen age at one tenth the rate at which we age.

Through the years, British's deeds demonstrated both wisdom and bravery. As respect for him grew, British became the leader of a region of Sosaria including many citystates, and was awarded the title of Lord British.

The First Age of Darkness.

At the time British arrived at Shamino's, a native lad was growing up in Sosaria, being trained in the ways of sorcery. He was a moody youth, given to sudden rages and fits of despondency. To offset the latter, he would take his dagger into the woods and hunt, leaving his prey to rot where they fell. He would return to his manor restored, strong in the confirmation of his power over life and death.

His name was Mondain, and Mondain's strange ways were a constant worry to his father, a busy, much respected mage. When Mondain was fifteen, his father took a stand.

"Thou shalt take a year off from magic, Mondain," his father said, "to improve thine attitudes and develop thy virtues. I have arranged for thee to live with the brothers in the abbey, where thou shalt practice compassion and humility.

"Learn thy lessons well, my son, and this ruby gem, which harnesses the power of the sun, shall be thine."

Mondain said nothing. The next night he slew his father and took the gem, for he was ready for power and his father was in his way.

At the same time as Lord British was gaining a reputation for fair

and honest government over his provinces and attracting attention for his startlingly innovative ideas, Mondain was using his father's gem against itself to produce a black jewel that would render him and his evil immortal. Success meant gaining even greater power over the minions of darkness.

As terrors wrought by Mondain caused increasing unrest and dismay across Sosaria, British's ideas for unity of the citystates became more and more appealing.

But the time was not quite ripe, for the widespread evil was beginning to take a tremendous toll. Something new was needed, thought British. He absently reached for the silver serpent he wore about his neck. Touching it in contemplation, he envisioned the kind of hero Sosaria needed to deal with Mondain.

Within days, a stranger arrived in Sosaria. With utter devotion to truth and good, the stranger grew into a hero capable of facing Mondain. Eventually, the heroic stranger found the malevolent gem and destroyed it, along with its creator. With Mondain's destruction, the forces of evil began to wane.

The Second Age of Darkness.

But good was not to rise victorious for long. Mondain's apprentice in sorcery was a beautiful young woman. Underestimated because of her youth, Minax was furious at the defeat of Mondain and at the destruction of the gem, whose existence she had surmised, and which she had intended to study and replicate for herself.

Setting her fury aside, Minax decided to take control of the evils of the world without the gem. She succeeded. Through her network of beasts and her own frightening power, she rained evil upon the world.

Again Lord British sent out the call for a hero. Again a stranger appeared. Again the evil was hunted down and destroyed. And with the destruction of Minax, this stranger was able to alter the future of the world from destruction to peace.

The Third Age of Darkness.

Decades passed in relative peace. Good leaders of the citystates turned more and more to Lord British for guidance, and Sosaria became a united land under his rule.

Then, one day, a sailor reported to Lord British the appearance of a hitherto unknown island, fiery and emanating terrifying evil. Scouts began reporting malevolent occurrences that seemed to be the work of a great evil mind.

Once more, Lord British sent out the call. This time, four strangers appeared. They survived the horrors of great dungeons and, with the help of the mystical timelord, the heroes found the secret island fortress of Exodus, the only progeny of Mondain and Minax, and annihilated it.

The Triad of Evil was destroyed, and great celebration ensued. In honor of the day, they called the new world Britannia.

The Age of the Avatar.

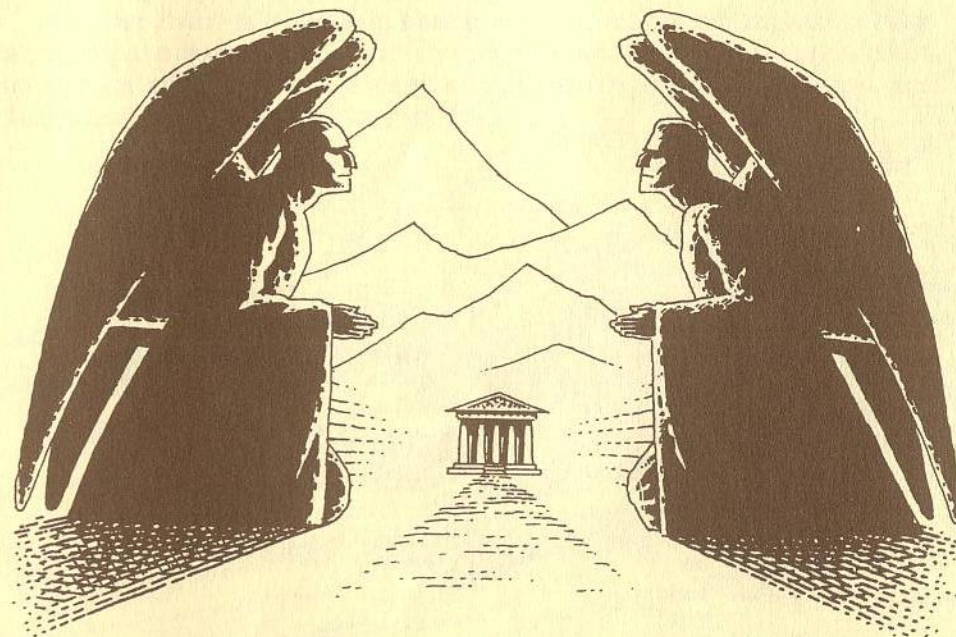
Tremendous growth and prosperity characterized the Age of the Avatar. The pursuits of scholarship, arts, and physical perfection flourished. The great castles of learning were established to study the principles of Truth, Love, and Courage. The eight citystates, now townes united under Lord British, were each dedicated to fostering the study and spread of a single virtue. Thus, virtue blossomed and spread, science was born and began to grow at a healthy pace, and happiness became a reality.

Now Lord British called for a single individual to be an example for his people. A champion of great devotion and dedication, the stranger who answered discovered the Codex of Ultimate Wisdom within the Great Stygian Abyss.

The Closing of Doom.

After the downfall of the Triad of Evil, and even after the Age of the Avatar, eight terrible dungeons survived: Deceit, Despise, Dastard, Wrong, Shame, Covetous, Hythloth, and the Great Stygian Abyss.

When Lord British summoned the Great Council, they determined both to raise and enshrine the Codex of Ultimate Wisdom and to seal the dungeons, those pits so conducive to the breeding of evil. And so they did. Thus ended the influence of great evil in the world.



Geography

Britannia's terrain is rich in variety, from white sandy deserts to thick, lush forests to icy crags of towering mountains.

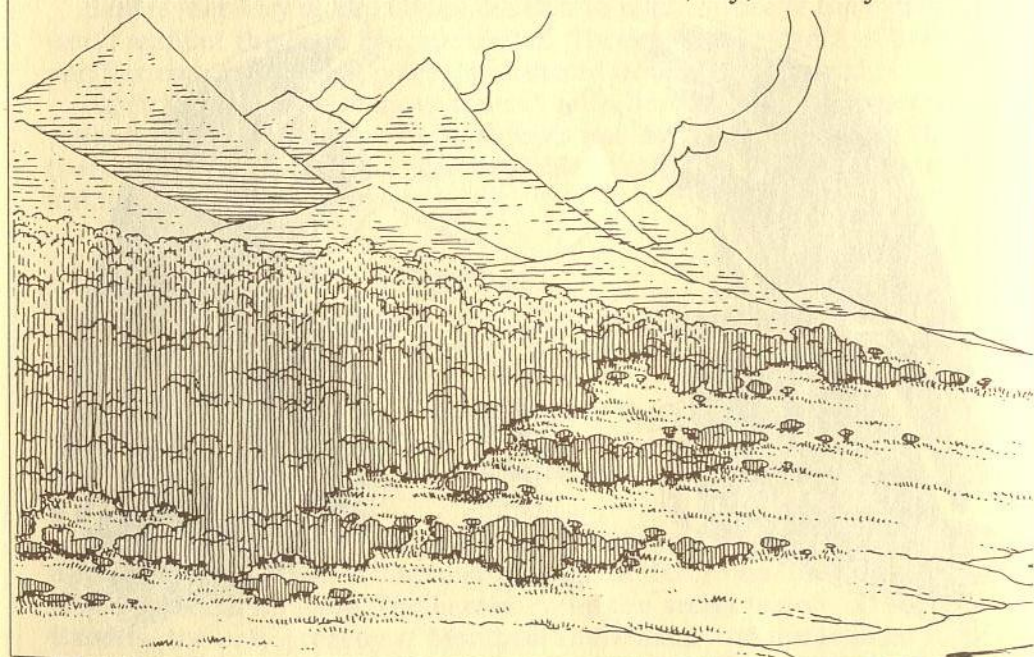
Land Terrain

The largest portion of Britannia is **grassland**. Vast rich green grasslands and fertile farming land stretch the vision and fill the heart with promise. For travelers, grasslands are fast and easy going. Although grasslands afford no cover against the hostile creatures that roam them, they enable thee to see danger approaching and prepare for it.

In the **brush**, seas of tall grass and scrubby shrubs, everything is as visible and as vulnerable as on the grasslands; only the going is slower and tougher. There is no advantage to traveling through the brush over grasslands, unless thou doth need to reach a point within it or it is well out of thy way to circumvent it.

Forests cover nearly all of northwest Britannia. The cool, redolent softness of the leaf-covered earth and the sweet air of the deep forests have enchanted many a traveler into a false sense of well-being in one of the most treacherous terrains. Dense, dark, and mysterious, the forests are haven to all sorts of creatures. Nor is the forest kind, for it allows no warning; a foe might be upon thee too quickly for thee to react.

The **deserts** of northeastern Britannia are hot, dry, and easy to lose



one's way in. Besides all sand looking much like all other sand, the heat is apt to play tricks on the eye, misleading travelers with landmarks that are not really there.

The **hills** are rustically beautiful, but climbing is time-consuming, even when the rise is gentle.

Mountains are rugged natural barriers for anyone without proper equipment. Beware, however, of certain wild creatures to whom the rocky crags are home. The highest peaks are simply impassable.

Swamps are generally poisonous, yet some life-giving herbs grow nowhere else. Some use the deadly mire as fortress against intrusion, for even monsters dislike venturing into the putrid muck. At least, some monsters dislike it; there are rumors of rare and strange monsters that thrive on the swamps and use them to devour their victims.

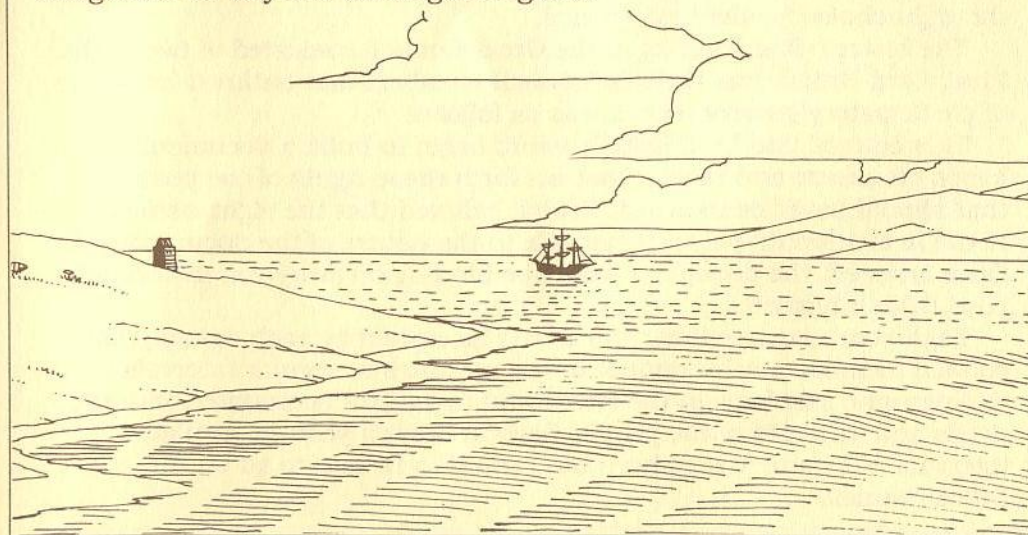
Besides the toxicity, slogging through the slime and hip-deep ooze of the swamps is an extremely slow business.

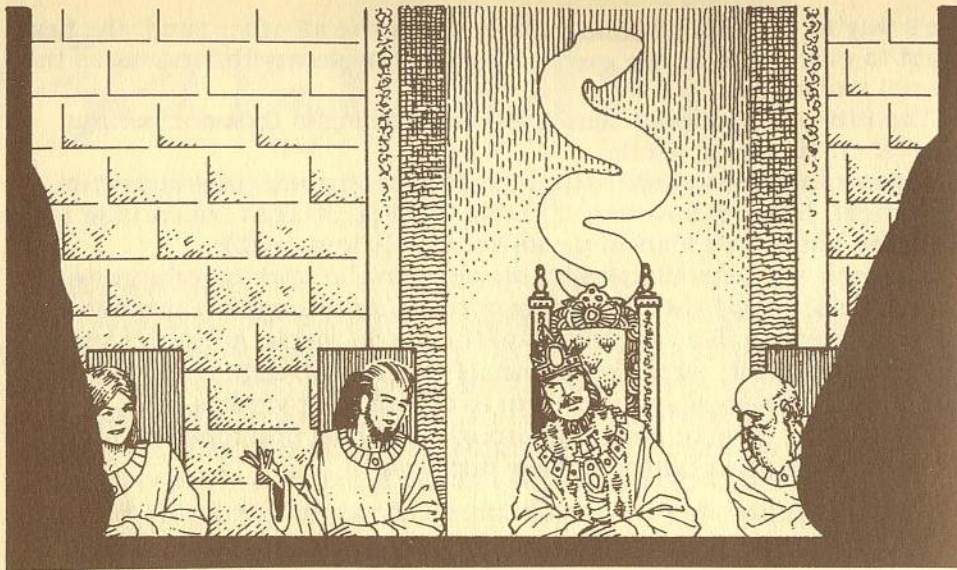
Waters

Britannia's vast **oceans** are fed by many **rivers** and **streams** that find their origin in mountain lakes and jungle swamps.

There are two major **lakes**: Lost Lake, in western central Britannia, feeds Lost River, which empties into the delta on the northwestern shore, by means of a network of tiny estuaries; Lock Lake, in north central Britannia, is actually a cutoff inlet from the sea and still has a mix of salt water. Britannia's third large lake, the one-time picturesque Lake Generosity, was a casualty of the great drought of the northeast and is now simply a bed of dry sand.

Whether river, lake, or sea, **shallows** are bubbly and impassable for large ships; **coastal waters** are ripply, deep enough for tall ships, calm enough for small boats; and **deep ocean waters** are rough, bumpy, and dangerous for any but the largest frigates.





Government

Under Lord British, Britannia has undergone a great transformation from totalitarian monarchy to representative democracy in what is called a monarchic republic. Instead of the single rule of the king, Lord British, Britannia is ruled by a combination of Lord British and a council comprised of representatives from each of the eight major townes. Although his intent for the future was that each towne elect its representative to the council, the first council was determined by appointment. British traveled to each towne, spending long hours with its leaders to determine the right choice for the first council.

The historic first meeting of the Great Council consisted of two parts. First, Lord British met with the council members and outlined his vision of participatory government. It was as follows:

This council and Lord British would begin to build a document, based on nature and reality, that set forth those rights of the people that should never be usurped. British believed that the eight virtues of the Avatar would play a major role in the nature of the document. Once adopted, the document would be binding on everyone, including Lord British himself.

Each year, a council member would be elected by each towne. That council member would conduct towne meetings at regular intervals to determine problems in the towne and to become acquainted with the needs and interests of the people. Several times a year, at regular intervals, the council member would travel to Britain to sit on the Great Council.

The council would ponder problems that occurred in Britannia and decide if the problems were in the purview of government. If so, they would determine the course of action government should take, perhaps writing a law, perhaps repealing a law, perhaps altering ways and means.

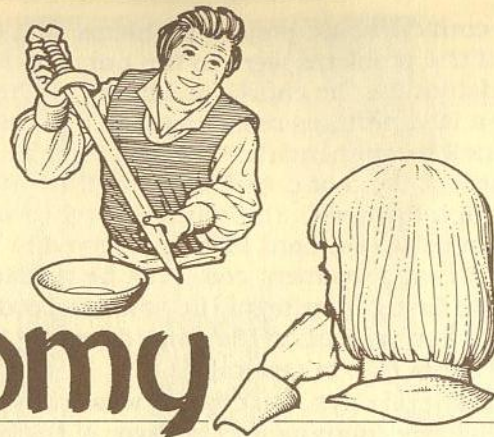
Council recommendations would then be presented to British, and he could accept them or object to them. If he objected, his own rules would require him to sit with the council to try to work out solutions acceptable to all. Nevertheless, Lord British reserved to himself the power of veto in the event that agreement could not be reached.

At that first gathering of the council, Lord British withdrew from the meeting after presenting his plan, directing the council to discuss the ideas and his rule in general.

After several days, the council was ready to present its findings. Its members were unanimously in favor of the new government plan Lord British had presented, and so it was enacted.

The first meeting continued for one month. Half the time was spent pounding out the new constitution and half the time was spent discussing affairs in what was to become normal council fashion. Since that time the council meets for two weeks four times a year, beginning on the solstices and the equinoxes.

The monarchy continues in some respects. The crown jewels, for example, continue to define the office of ruler, both figuratively and, by their magic content, truly. These precious emblems consist of the jewel-encrusted gold crown, believed to contain a perfect ray of sunlight; the pure gold sceptre, topped by the crystal orb of power; and the silver amulet, in the shape of the mighty earth serpent, said to have come from another world.



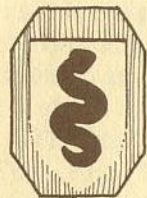
Economy

The chief industry of Britannia is farming, but it is the distribution of farm products and other goods through a wide network of merchants that is most visible. Pubs and inns thrive throughout Britannia, forges of weapons and armour for stalwart adventurers are common, and healers and the sellers of herbs and reagents flourish.

Farming

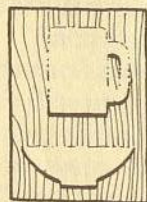
Farming is the major occupation in most rural areas. Farms produce wheat, corn, barley, and, in season, all the sumptuous fruits and vegetables Britannians love.

Merchants

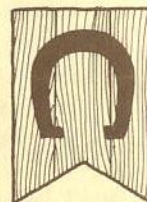


Many shoppes and enterprises are available to citizens and knights throughout the land. **Armouries** provide a market for both weapons and armour. Most armouries will consider buying used equipment, as they recognise the likelihood that one will then need new. The prices they will pay vary, but expect not nearly full value, as they must make a profit on resale. The types of goods sold also vary among armouries; shoppers may have to visit many armouries to find the wares they seek.

Stables are not found in many cities, but there are a few in castles and private residences that will consider selling to the public. Most stables deal in strong plough horses, rugged mountain horses, swift steppes horses, and a few even have Valorian steeds, which are most excellent war horses. All carry full supplies for the well equipped rider.



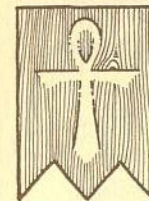
Meals purchased at **markets** or in restaurants are often delicious and comfortably filling, but will not sustain travelers long on the road. Most markets offer travelers packs of rations in quantity. Prices vary greatly from town to town.



Pubs are oft found in markets and inns. Good ale and stout is complemented by a well-cooked leg of mutton, a fresh pheasant, or a juicy side of beef. A good customer may find the chef offering a taste of the day's special and of the local gossip as well.

Some of the best eating houses and pubs have music provided by minstrels. Do not hesitate to speak to the musicians and let them know how much their work is appreciated. Some musicians may have something interesting to tell, or may become friends or supporters.

Pub owners are a friendly lot. They chat with their clientele and they listen well. A good tipper may learn something very interesting in a pub.



Healers have shoppes in many cities and villages, and in some castles and keeps. Bold knights frequently incur serious wounds. Poison and plague also take their toll. Fortunately, medicine is advanced in the treatment of just these problems. While it is hard to say any price is unfair for saving a life, some healers are known for their reasonable prices and others are not. Skara Brae's healer has been known to heal even those who cannot pay at all.

Few health problems are beyond the ken of the healers, whether disease, wounds, or poison. Some healers are even experimenting with the concept of resurrection. There have rumbled persistent rumors of magical resurrection techniques being used by extremely adept mages within closeknit, secret groups. There is still some controversy over whether such techniques should be pursued, but Lord British is known to have supported the research at every turn.

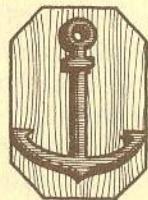
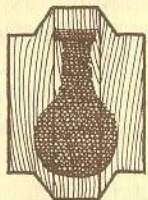
Apothecaries are experts in growing and preparing herbs and reagents for use in magic. Shoppes generally offer mostly locally available reagents, although some apothecaries have better facilities for importing than others. Climate and terrain have a lot to do with plant availability and the consequent variable prices. Shop carefully, for the shoppe that has the best price on one herb or reagent may have the worst on another.

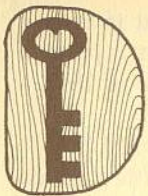


Inns are a source of pride for several Britannian townes and villages. They are comfortable and reasonable and usually provide a good, healing night's rest. The inn in the island city of Skara Brae even boasts a magnificent view.

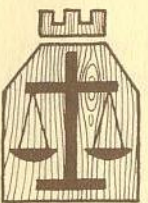
Most inns also provide for long stays. If a party member has a long-term need for lodging, the party can rent a room by the month and pick up the friend at a later date.

Shipwrights are found in several port cities. These are where frigates and skiffs are built. Since shipbuilders are usually busy building ships, their shoppe hours are often short and sporadic. When the shipwright is in, one can buy skiffs alone, which are not very expensive, or frigates, which are very expensive and generally come with skiffs on board.





Guilds carry the ancient symbol of the thieves' trade, though many a good adventurer oft has need of their goods. In olden times, guilds sold such items as lockpicks, various kinds of glasses for seeing what the naked eye cannot, equipment for working clandestinely in the dark, and the like.



The Government, symbolised by the crown and the scales of justice, has its seat in the castle of Lord British, the king. But the government offices, where the day-to-day administration takes place, reside in Yew, the towne of justice. This centre houses the high court of justice and the public prison for all Britannia.

Settlements

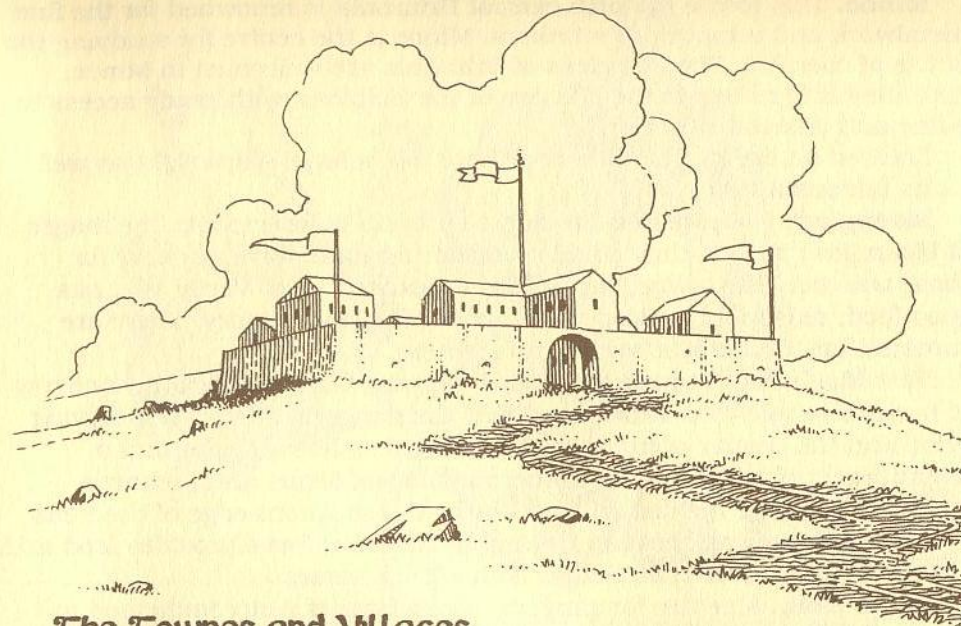
The Castles

The Castle of Lord British. Headquarters and home of Lord British, located on Brittany Bay. Those aspiring to the Way of the Avatar should become very familiar with this landmark. The marble and tile castle has been enlarged and improved since the Age of the Avatar. Now five stories, the castle has among its many features two kitchens, an excellent armoury, a rooftop observatory, and the finest stable in the land.

The Lycaeum. In the northwestern corner of Verity Isle, ever searching the skies, the observatory tower that crowns Britannia's centre of learning can be seen from many leagues across the ocean. Libraries and laboratories, writing desks and discussion rooms, and every known tool for the discerning of truth are housed here.

Empath Abbey. Nestled quietly against the sheltering trees of the Deep Forest, just southwest of Yew, this cloister of love lies open to all of good heart. Here, by the shores of the calming sea, the sisters and brothers of Empath Abbey retreat to meditate, growing ever nearer to understanding and answers that will benefit us all.

Serpent's Hold. Staunchly guarding the deep harbor of the Isle of Deeds, itself bulwarked by mountains and streams, the Serpent's Hold stands as a monument to the courage of all those who fight for good. In this stronghold are gymnasiums to hone thy body and training fields on which to hone thy battle skills. Here also are healers to tend thy wounds, and sunny strands to heal thy soul. And finally here too are comrades in arms sharing stories of honour, valor, triumph, and restraint which are perhaps the greatest teachers and healers of all.



The Townes and Villages

Britain. Principal towne of the Empire of Britannia, the busy seaport of Britain lies in central Britannia on Brittany Bay. Because of the large number of visitors to Lord British's castle who pass through or head-quarter in Britain, the bards headquartered in this towne of compassion and the arts put their emphasis on hospitality. Britain has a large hotel and outstanding pubs and food. There is also an armoury wherein thou canst buy the finest bows made.

The Britannys. These three important suburbs recently sprung up around Lord British's castle provide many of the goods and services needed by the court of Lord British. East Brittany specializes in ship-building and boasts a fine healer. North Brittany offers a small, rustic inn and fine stables among its several farms. West Brittany is a farming towne, supplying its own needs and those of the four surrounding settlements, including the Castle of Lord British and Britain.

Buccaneer's Den. This island village lies due east of Paws. Said to be a centre for thieves and blackguards to this day, Buccaneer's Den is a thriving towne that offers some exotic shopping, as well as an inn, restaurant, armoury, and shipbuilder.

Cove. The magical village of Cove nestles among the mountains south of Lock Lake. Cove's healers and alchemists are among the best in Britannia. Here too is the magnificent temple of virtue, built to honour those on the quest of the Avatar.

Jhelom. Far off the mainland, among the mountains on the central and largest of the Valorian Isles, the bustling towne of Jhelom provides food and lodging to visitors as well as to its fighters and students of valor. A fine armoury and shipwright ensure safe access to the mainland.

Minoc. This towne in north central Britannia is renowned for the fine metalwork and armour of its blacksmiths. Minoc is the centre for studying the virtue of sacrifice. The homeless of Britannia are welcomed in Minoc; here they find refuge in the Mission of the Helpless, with ready access to a fine and charitable healer.

Located on the northern coast, Minoc has a large shipwright as well as its famous armoury.

Moonglow. Honesty and the quest for truth is foremost to the mages of Moonglow; in fact, they abide no dishonesty and have no room for those who do. This towne, tucked on a southern tip of Verity Isle, has good food, reasonably priced herbs, and a fine observatory. There are rumors that thou mayst see thy future here.

New Magincia. A towne built on the ruins of old Magincia by a colony of humble people who understand well the dangers of false, self-serving pride and the beauty of humility. New Magincia has a healer and a restaurant tucked among its numerous modest farms and orchards.

Paws. A village nestled on a cove near the southern edge of the Fens of the Dead, midway between Britain and Trinsic, Paws provides food and shelter for the traveler, as well as a change of horses.

Skara Brae. A centre for rangers, Skara Brae is a city immersed in the study of spirituality. The city lies on the southernmost of three isles just west of Spiritwood. A gentle towne of kind, thoughtful, and generous people, Skara Brae houses a fine but inexpensive inn, an excellent apothecary, and a healer who uses physical, magical, and spiritual medicine. Those in need are always welcome at the Skara Brae healer, and can be healed regardless of their wealth.

Trinsic. On a grassy plain on the southeastern shore of Britannia, Trinsic's honourable paladins impress visitors with their courage and devotion to truth. A sunny towne of marble buildings and shaded parks, Trinsic has a lovely pond, an armoury, a healer, and a fine stable.

Yew. Long a gathering place for druids in their pursuit of justice, Yew is the site of the Supreme Court of Britannia and nurtures the great legal and judicial minds who practice there. Besides the courts, jail, and penal areas, Yew has one of the best restaurants, with a fine pub, an armoury, and an apothecary. Nestled beneath the trees of the deep forest, Yew is second in population only to Britain.

The Keeps

Keeps are fortified manors, often isolated, away from townes and villages. While many are personal retreats, some are schools for young people, cloisters, and organizations.

The Lighthouses

Rustic lighthouses were built throughout Britannian waters during the recent years of peace; their bright presence has dramatically lowered the number of ships breaking up on reefs and shoals in dark and storms.



Populace

Adventurers are generally categorized by professional affiliation: mages, bards, and fighters. Druids, magicians who draw their very powers from nature and natural phenomena, are regarded as a subset of mages. Tinkers are bards with a special knack for building or repairing who serve as keepers of our oral history as they move from towne to towne. And paladins, shepherds, and rangers, long having fought valiantly at the side of the elite fighters from the Valorian Isles, are generally associated with fighters.

Of course mages, bards, and fighters are not always adventuring. Often they may be found among the general populace along with villagers, merchants, minstrels, jesters, farmers, beggars, and guards.

Mages

Mage is the title subsuming all Britannians endowed with full magic powers and for whom magic is primary. Mages tend to settle in Moonglow, enjoying its proximity to the scholarly and esoteric treasures of the Lycaenum; indeed, many youngsters who show magical leanings early are sent to live with groups of mages near the Lycaenum and are schooled in its ways from an early age. Others favor Yew for its emphasis on nature.

Skill in magic requires serious study. With such sedentary childhoods it is no wonder that most mages are not very strong. Do not, however, take that to mean they are not healthy; as a group, mages tend to live longer than any others.

Bards

Bards excel in dexterity and poise. They rightly choose professions that make good use of their talented hands and agile bodies: minstrel,

archer, locksmith, and tinker are just a few. Fearless in battle, bards are often as quick of mind as of hand and their magic abilities are keen, although their power for magic is half that of mages.

Britain is a favorite gathering place of many bards. Others, especially tinkers, are based in Minoc.

Fighters

In the isolation of the Valorian Isles, valorous fighters are trained in the arts of battle. Strong and fearless, the fighters of Jhelom can overcome any known foe. They are trained in all weapons and they show dexterity in all armour. Most fighters prefer the sword or bludgeoning weapon, for they have the strength to wield the heaviest two-handed sword and to do extreme damage with it.

Often found fighting beside the best of Jhelom are the paladins of Trinsic, the fierce rangers of Skara Brae, and the humble shepherds of New Magincia.

Although fighters enjoy the advantages of magic, they do not practice it and seldom show any tendencies of talent in that direction. They do show an almost magical intuition about animals; no people train horses or outthink monsters better than fighters.

Transportation

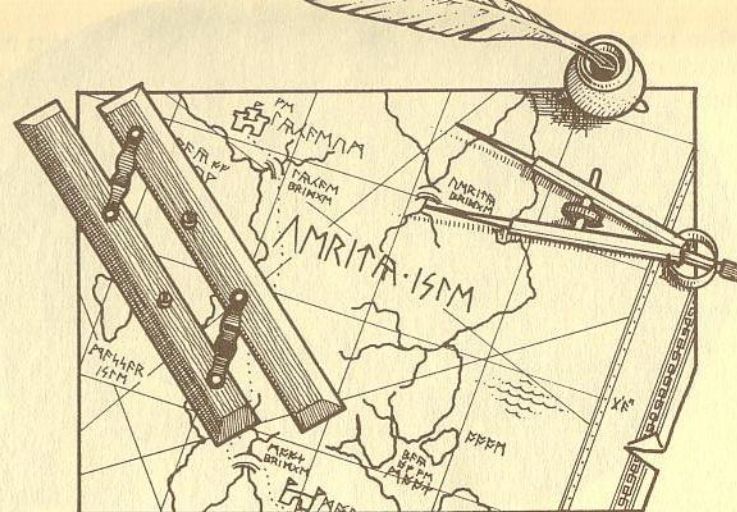
Most traveling in Britannia is done on foot, even though it is rough going, slow and dangerous. There are alternatives for those who can afford and handle them.

Horses

Many travelers enjoy riding on horseback; it is faster, less tiring, and safer than walking, since horses can outrun many of the hostile creatures. Know, though, that horses cannot travel over water and are apt to wander away (with or without encouragement) if not properly secured when left.

Ships

Reaching island communities requires travel by ship. Despite rather foolish rumors of people wandering the heavens in great airships, sailing on water is the fastest and most popular long-distance mode of transportation there is. The most common watercraft on the ocean are frigates. Tall, stately three-masters, the frigates cut through seas swiftly and smoothly. They generally have a two-level open deck and a below-



deck with a forward cabin, rear bunkroom, and centre cargo hold. Most ocean going frigates are built to accommodate heavy cannons for broad-side fighting and have two gangplank gateways on each side.

Speedy it is, but ocean travel is fraught with dangers, especially after dark near rocky coasts. Many unpleasant monsters populate the deep, and pirate ships are always on the lookout for moneyed prey.

Skiffs

Small double-lock rowboats, used as lifeboats on frigates, skiffs can make their way through all but the shallowest mud or swamp. Widely used for exploration of riverheads and mountain streams, they are also occasionally found being put to more recreational uses in townes. They provide a charming way to follow the little estuaries that crisscross Britannia. In fact, there are said to be little-known places unreachable by any other means. However, skiffs are unsafe on deep ocean waters.

Navigation

Speed is critical on the open seas. There are many dangerous inhabitants of the deep who will overtake and attack slow ships. Speed is optimized by traveling perpendicular to the wind. Angling directly into the wind affords only the slowest passage possible. When the wind dies completely, there is no option but to resort to the oars.

Too close to shore, speed can be fatal, and sails should be replaced with oars for careful maneuvering. Unfortunately, many foolhardy captains have run their ships up on reefs and shoals at full speed under sail, losing ship and crew. Those that survive such wrecks have had to hole up and repair their vessels. Since extensive repairs take quite a while to accomplish, it is important to hole up in safe harbors for this repair work.



Astronomy

The definitive work in astronomy is *Celestial Britannia* by Sir John, astronomer and scribe at the Lycaem. This passage is comprised of excerpts from his book recording his scientific discoveries and documenting Britannian astral theories that predate the emergence of science.

In the heaven beyond our skies, dwell stars whose numbers are beyond our reckoning. Within our heaven, circling our world, sweeps our bright sun. Ten other orbs trace tight paths around our world. The twin moons Trammel and Felucca are desolate, their light only a reflection of the sun's brilliance.

The other eight orbs are thought by some to be planets like our own. According to the roles they play in our many legends, they have been named for the virtues of the Avatar. The closest is Honesty, followed further out by Compassion, Valor, Justice, Sacrifice, Honour, Spirituality, and Humility.

Many tales are told of knights traveling from town to town, even across water, merely by stepping into a wall of light. There are few verifiable reports of moongate travel. However, sifting through those reports that are verifiable, it has become clear that they operate as follows.

Each night at the apex of the first moon, Trammel, the eight moon-gates appear, rectangles of shimmering blue light rising from the ground. They remain until Felucca reaches her apex. While the moon-gates are open, a traveler entering one will be instantly transported to another moon-gate in a different locale.

The traveler's destination is determined by the phase of the moon

closest to midheaven. Moongate travel is said to be fast and safe; however, there have been confusing and conflicting reports of what transpires when the moons are equidistant in the midheaven. Moongate travelers should exercise caution.

Over the ages, comets, fiery nebulae, have torn through our skies as harbingers of impending doom. They appeared just before the emergence of the Dark Lord Mondain. They heralded the reign of the Enchantress Minax, and they foretold the impending danger of the hellborn Exodus.

Now, while we live in the midst of peace and enlightenment, the comets have begun again.

Language

The language of Britannia is rich and poetic. It is derived from Old Sosarian, which varies mostly from the widespread current language in its alphabet, which is more runic than today's. The old runes continue to be used widely in rural areas, and there is a movement to increase their familiarity to city people. Still, among the cityborn, translation of runic messages, letter for letter, is sometimes necessary. The Runic Alphabet is the earliest known system of writing sounds using runes or letters. The most commonly used runes follow, with their modern equivalents.

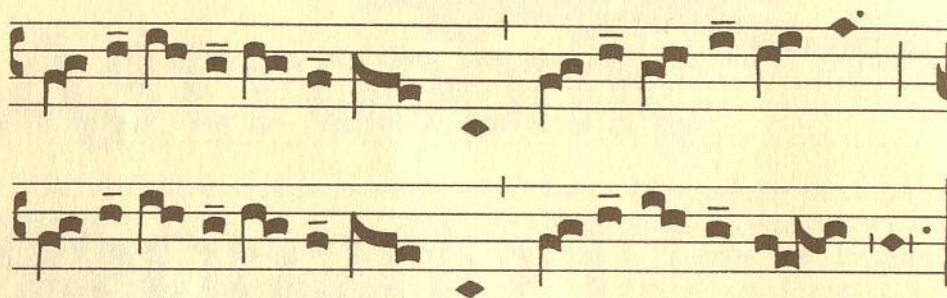
Æ A	ME	I I	MM	Ɔ 9	U U	AY	NG
B B	Ɔ F	Ɔ J	† N	R R	^ V	Y Z	† EA
Ɔ C	X G	Ɔ K	Ɔ O	Ɔ S	N W	† TH	† ST
† D	† H	† L	K P	† T	† X	† EE	

Music

Music is much loved throughout Britannia. Those wealthy enough often own a harpsichord, and the better pubs employ good lute playing minstrels to entertain their patrons.

Without question the best known name in folk music is that of Iolo FitzOwen. "Stones," a ballad about the mystic shrines, has long been popular among bards and the commonfolk. It is known to be a favorite of His Majesty, Lord British, as well. FitzOwen's masterwork, with lyrics by his wife Gwenllïan Gwalch'gaeaf, is a sample of fine music.

Stones



Long ago ran the sun on a folk who had a dream
And the heart and the will and the power;
They moved earth; they carved stone; moulded hill and channeled stream
That we might stand on the wide plains of Wiltshire.

Now men asked who they were, how they built and wonder why
That they wrought standing stones of such size.
What was done 'neath our shade? What was pray'ed 'neath our skies
As we stood on the wyrd plains of Wiltshire.

Oh what secrets we could tell if you'd listen and be still.
Rid the stink and the noise from our skirts.
But you haven't got the clue and perhaps you never will.
Mute we stand on the cold plains of Wiltshire.

Still we loom in the mists as the ages roll away
And we say of our folk, "they are here!"
That they built us and they died and you'll not be knowing why
Save we stand on the bare plains of Wiltshire.



Combat

Three important lessons have been derived from the great battles with evil in our past. The foremost is that neither magic, nor prowess at arms, nor purity of spirit alone is enough to defeat evil. Only the careful coordination of arms with magic by the virtuous will bring victory. The second lesson is basic: prowess comes only with practice and experience. The third lesson is this: the use of force against the innocent will always bring retribution.

Armaments have improved greatly over the years. Today's knights have a great selection of weapons and armour at their disposal. In addition, fortunate knights may come across magical rings and amulets to wear or use. Before battle, knights can ready several items of equipment carried by their party: helms, shields, suits of armour, and weapons from daggers to halberds. Weapons can be dropped or exchanged in the midst of battle, but no enemy has ever waited while a knight changed armour.

Strength and endurance may get a knight through a few battles, but none survive long without developing tactical skills. Successful knights learn to watch for mistakes the enemy makes. Successful leaders learn to design strategies around the strengths and weaknesses of their party.

In particular, fighters are known for their strength and ability to wield great weapons while wearing the heaviest of armour. In general, they are most effective when formed into a shield wall in the frontmost ranks. There are exceptions—desperate situations where an offensively well-armed fighter may do well to charge headfirst into enemy ranks, attacking the key members.

Bards, while weaker than fighters, are proficient archers because of their keen sight and excellent dexterity. Their dexterity also enables them to regroup faster and strike more blows against their opponents.

Mages, who are not as strong, often prefer to avoid warfare entirely, spending their time instead in scholarly pursuits. However, those mages who choose to defend the crown are among the most fearsome foes of evil. An accomplished archmage may annihilate an entire horde of monstrous enemies with a single spell.

Missile weapons such as bows and crossbows are essentially useless in hand-to-hand combat; nearby foes are apt to seize the opportunity to interfere with an archer's fire as they do with a magic user's spellcasting. For this reason, mages and bow-wielders are generally best placed behind a cover of fighters, where they can effectively deliver their blows. However, when a spell of cataclysmic and widespread effect is needed, a mage often must venture to the front lines and seek a niche in the shield wall from which to cast his spell, so the spell will not act to destroy friends as well as enemies.



Armaments

Armoury

The most courageous knight shows good sense to wear strong armour on any expedition. Full body armour, helmets, shields, magical rings and jewelry, and other magical trinkets are all worthwhile; but they are also expensive.

Body armour comes in a range of styles and degrees of effectiveness.

Cloth. Usually little more than a heavy quilted gambeson worn below a tunic, cloth armour is inexpensive and comfortable. But it affords only limited protection.

Leather. A cut above cloth, yet also fairly inexpensive, leather armour is made from thick leather hardened by boiling, often in paraffin.

Scale. Fashioned from four to six inch square overlapping plates attached to cloth or leather gambeson, scale armour looks like its namesake: fish scales. Although scale is often somewhat noisy, it offers good protection.

Chain. Chain mail is fashioned from small loops of metal wire linked in a manner to make something resembling metal cloth. The best chain mail has each link actually riveted shut. Chain mail provides very good protection but is quite expensive.

Plate. Custom-made from hand-forged sheets of metal, plate armour affords its wearer the most complete protection possible. However, it is very expensive and can be borne by only the strongest.

Helms often match body armour in material and strength, but variations, such as offensively spiked helmets, are available.

Shields also vary greatly. Not all war rigs call for shields—any use of two handed weapons precludes them and they require some strength—yet many thank shields for their lives.

Weaponry

The weapon is the most important material choice an adventurer has to make. A wide range exists.

Daggers offer two choices. The common **dagger** is useful when its ability to be concealed is a benefit; and it can be thrown in open combat. The **main gauche** is more formidable, especially when used as a second weapon.

Swords continue to be the most popular weapon. There are **long** and **short swords**, and **two-handed swords**.

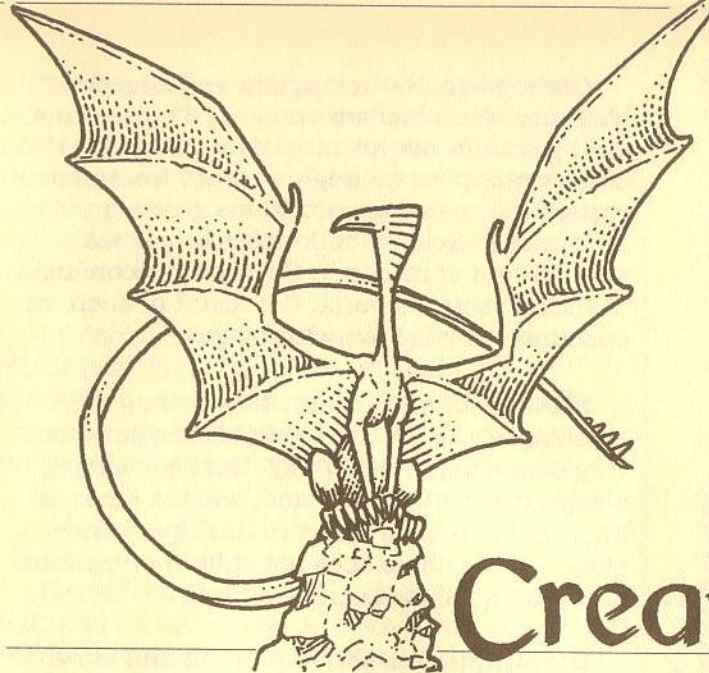
Missile weapons are carried by most experienced knights no matter what weapon they keep ready in their hand. It is always an advantage to fell thine enemy from afar when possible, before the threats of his hand weapons can reach thee. Inexpensive and easy to port is the **sling**, and ammunition is plentiful in open country. **Bows** come from craftsmen in the deep forest. Made from strong and resilient yew, bows, and their stronger counterparts, crossbows, make formidable long-range weapons. Be aware, however, that one engaged in hand-to-hand combat is unlikely to be able to load such a weapon, much less shoot it.

Some knights prefer missiles they can hurl without mechanical aid. Popular **throwing weapons** include **daggers**, **spears**, **axes**, and **flasks of flaming oil**.

The effectiveness of most weapons depends upon the dexterity of the weapons' wielders, but mass weapons are often preferred by the very strong, if not so nimble, because these bludgeons depend upon the great strength of the the wielder to crush through an opponents' defenses rather than evade them.

Oldest of all bludgeons, and probably of all weapons, is the **club**. Clubs are crude weapons, but when a blow connects it often does the trick. The **mace** is much more streamlined than the club. Its weight is balanced to derive the most possible effect with the most possible accuracy. A "mace on a chain" is the **morning star**, which reaches over obstacles to smite thy foe at range. One blow straight on from this and the enemy is out till morning—at least. Finally, there is the **two-handed hammer**. It takes great strength to wield it, but the hammer can inflict devastating damage.

Polearms require much strength to wield but they're extremely effective. Most popular among those strong enough to wield it is the **halberd**, a long stout staff with a battleax blade at the end that allows its wielder to strike a foe at twice the distance of most weapons.



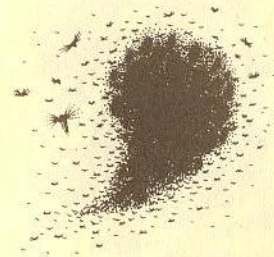
Creatures

Wild creatures, intelligent and not, roam the countryside; others frequent the waters. Few of these creatures are evil; but many attack out of hunger or when surprised.

Creatures of the Land and Sky

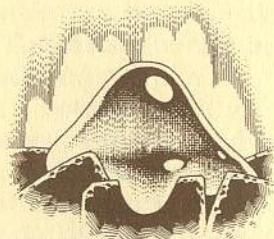
Insect Swarms. Pesty insects have little muscle or brain, but their tiny size lets them move quickly, dodging and feinting. They bite more often than they miss, but their sting does little damage. Once hit, all insects are easily squashed. Rare is the insect that delivers a fatal bite, but a swarm of thousands can mean death.

Bats. These annoying creatures live by night, usually, and travel in flocks. Often their high pitched screech is heard before they are seen. Though flighty and hard to hit, bats are not difficult to kill. As attackers they are relentless and vicious.





Giant Rats. Natural agility and sharp teeth are rats' chief advantages. They are not strong and do not hit very hard. The mortal danger rats pose to knights comes from their capacity for passing on noxious germs and substances. Seldom do knights tangle with rats without someone in the group becoming ill with poison. At worst, the result of such an encounter is infection with plague.



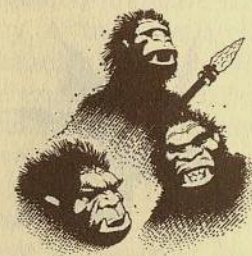
Slimes. In appearance, slimes are gooey green splats. They are weak, clumsy, and not very damaging, individually. But they almost always travel in schools and, when a slime is hit, it is apt to split into two healthy, hostile slimes. If the slime does not split, it succumbs quite easily. Slimes carry no booty.



Giant Spiders. Although weak and slow, spiders take their toll: they poison, both on touch and by spitting venom from a distance. Spiders have been known to carry a few goods.



Snakes. Extremely poisonous and quite accurate when shooting their poison even from a distance, snakes are otherwise relatively harmless. They are easy to destroy, once engaged directly.



Orcs. Orcs are often more annoying than dangerous to the seasoned adventurer, but they can be a grave threat to the novice, especially when they travel in large groups or accompanied by a giant or two. Generally, they are fairly easy to defeat, do a modicum of damage if they hit, and carry meagre belongings.

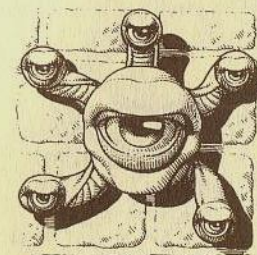
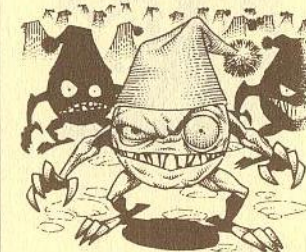
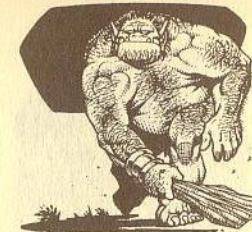
Trolls. Large misshapen humanoids that like to live underground, trolls are strong and dextrous and can cause moderate damage to their victims. Fortunately, they are not very enduring. Trolls tend to lie in wait to ambush unsuspecting travelers. Trolls like treasures and often carry some with them.

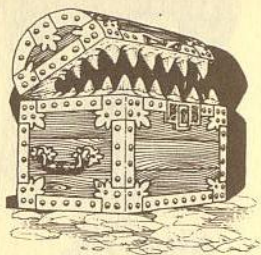
Ettins. Strange two-headed creatures, ettins hurl large boulders with enough strength to do considerable damage. Though not magical, they are quite hardy and often carry a good many interesting belongings.

Gremlins. The blow of a gremlin is hardly felt, and he is not very hard to do in; but beware, for he travels in huge packs and he may leave you starving. The gremlin's ability to consume food at an inordinate rate is startling and dismaying. Once overcome, he usually leaves some goods.

Headlesses. No one knows exactly how the senses work on these mutant abominations. Do they sense the world only through touch and feeling? Or do they "see" with some inner vision? Whatever the answer, these relatively strong creatures are fairly enduring and do mild damage to their foes. They tend to carry goods with them.

Gazers. Giant, magical floating eyes, gazers mesmerize their foes, turning them against each other. They make up for their weak, clumsy physique with strong intelligence and a fairly good constitution.





Mimics. Masters of imitation, mimics make themselves so like treasure chests that many an adventurer has met his doom trying to open one. Mimics have little courage and even less patience, though, so if one is willing to wait a few minutes just a few steps away from suspect chests, they are apt to reveal themselves by shooting poison. Close up, mimics bludgeon with strength and dexterity, doing unpleasant damage. Getting past their deadly deceptions can reveal fine treasure.



Reapers. The strange, magical creatures known as reapers are strong, enduring, and do severe damage by bludgeoning. Their weakness, if it can be so called, is their immobility; although their arms strike out about them, they cannot change locations. They throw magical bolts at distant foes. They also bludgeon nearby creatures with their thick tentacles. Reapers are quite hardy, but often worth the trouble: they hoard good booty.



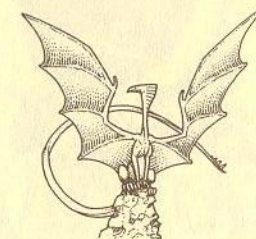
Wisps. It simply is not known exactly what a wisp is. Harmless looking little bits of flashing light, wisps are extremely agile and highly intelligent. Although they are not strong, they do serious damage, taking their victims by surprise again and again, blow after blow. They often attack in large groups and they teleport from place to place on the battlefield. Worst of all, they can magically possess members of the opposing party. Wisps seem to have impossibly strong constitutions and are quite difficult to destroy.



Sand Traps. Sand traps burrowing in the sand are nearly impossible to notice, but a party passing too close to one is in for trouble. Strong and agile, these desert monsters strike out at anything that comes near their hiding places, and they hit very hard. They are also very hardy, and their endurance has meant the demise of more than one adventurer. When a

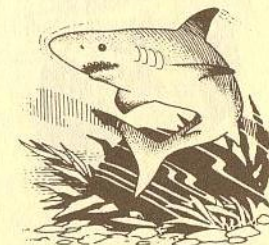
sand trap is overcome, however, generous treasure is revealed in the sand.

Dragons. Strongest and most feared of creatures, dragons shoot extremely damaging magic fireballs and are nearly impossible to defeat. They can attack while in flight and may do in an entire party before it has a chance to engage in close combat. Killing a dragon, however, can earn the slayer great treasure.

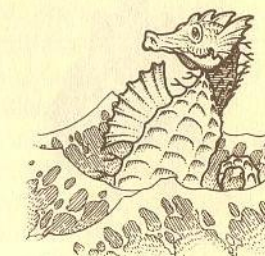


Creatures of the Sea

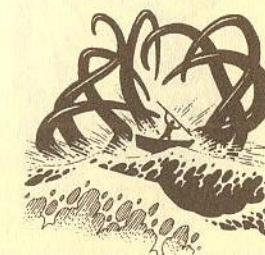
Sharks. Strong and agile in water, sharks are not particularly intelligent and cause little damage to creatures that are not in the water, despite their frightening appearance. They can endure quite a beating before dying.



Sea Horses. These graceful, appealing ocean creatures have nasty personalities. They enjoy shooting foes at range, which they do very effectively. They are also rather strong, flexible, even intelligent, and they take a fair amount of punishment to be defeated.

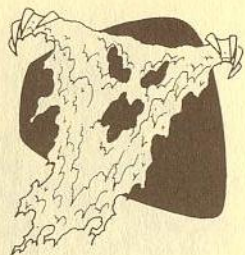


Squids. Squids are unintelligent, but the dexterity of their tentacles makes their considerable strength a real menace. They throw their poisonous ink from a distance, and it is always very damaging. These unpleasant sea creatures are hardy and difficult to overcome.





Sea Serpents. These serpents can appear from nowhere to rock a ship. Capable of launching great fireballs from a considerable distance – even across an entire island – they are among the most formidable of opponents. Since they are not intelligent and are easily outwitted, the best strategy is often to evade them and flee. However, if forced into battle, closing in to engage the serpent directly in combat will improve a ship's odds of surviving.



From Beyond the Grave

Ghosts. Spirits of the uneasy dead, these bodiless creatures compensate for their lack of strength with excellent dexterity and the ability to disappear at will. Although ghosts do not inflict much damage with a blow, defeating them will require cunning.

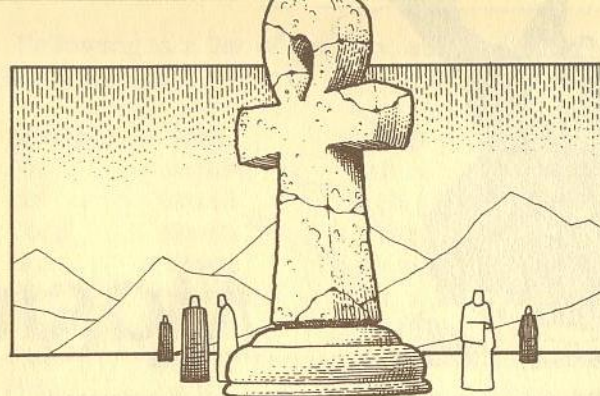


Skeletons. Perhaps the most common of undead creatures, skeletons lack strength and brains, but they are dextrous and can take a surprising amount of punishment. They often carry some goods.



Daemons. Very strong, agile, and smart, daemons have repertoires of magic that include summoning other daemons and possessing their opponents. They are extremely hardy and difficult to kill even if incapacitated. Daemons fly and can easily manage to cross rivers or shallow waters, although they are seldom encountered in mid ocean.

When daemons possess another creature, they disappear into that soul, leaving neither trace nor treasure.



Virtue

After years of meditation and thought, after hundreds of quests along the mental, physical, and spiritual path to peace and fulfillment, a person might reach near perfection in the eight virtues of Avatarhood. Only while an individual continues to strive against the external and internal forces of evil, can he or she be said to be on the path of the Avatar.

The ankh is the symbol of peace and benevolence toward all creatures, worn as a sign by those on the lifelong Quest of the Avatar. Ankhs are believed also to enhance courage and loyalty to goodness and to help ward off harm for knights striving to achieve the eight virtues.

Honesty is scrupulous respect for truth – the willingness never to deceive oneself or another. **Compassion** is nonjudgmental empathy for one's fellow creatures. **Valor** is the courage to take actions in support of one's convictions. **Justice** is the devotion to truth, tempered by love. **Sacrifice** is the courage to give of oneself in the name of love. **Honour** is the courage to stand for the truth, against any odds. **Spirituality** is the concern with one's inner being and how one deals with truth, love, and courage. **Humility** is perceiving one's place in the world, not according to one's own accomplishments, but according to the intrinsic value of all individuals.

Each of Britannia's eight leading townes celebrates one of the virtues of Avatarhood, and each has raised a **shrine** to that virtue. The shrines are located in retreats to ensure tranquillity in natural settings, so traveling to some shrines requires a considerable journey from their townes.

The only requirement for using a shrine is knowing the mantra for that virtue. A mantra is a sound repeated continuously during meditation, helping to clear the mind and focus the spirit. Each virtue has a specific mantra that works best for it, and sincere meditation can bring great wisdom. Someone in towne will usually divulge the mantra for the town's shrine.



MAGIC

No one knows exactly when the powers of magic were discovered. Little by little, stories of impossible coups and miraculous recoveries increased in number and detail, until finally even the most skeptical people began to give credence to some mystic factors. And only then did the serious scholarly search for magical means and lore begin. Few remain who do not accept the reality of magic.

Yet the knowledge of magic and its use appears to be in its infancy. There are few formal schools in which to learn magic. To be a user of magic, one must travel far and wide to learn from various mages who have developed and honed special magical abilities. Even then there is no guarantee the mages will impart their knowledge.

The Language of Magic

Some aspects of magical lore have become fairly well known. One such is the language of magic. This is a set of twenty-four syllables compiled by a great language scholar after traveling throughout Britannia for more than seven years. These are all the components of any magic spell yet known; but they are little help—and extremely dangerous—without knowledge of how to combine them into the phrases that make meaningful incantations.

Following is a list of these powerful syllables, approximations of their meanings, and a guide to their pronunciation.

Syllable	Idea	Sound	Syllable	Idea	Sound
An	negate	ah n	Nox	poison	n ah ks
Bet	small	b eh t	Por	movement	p oar
Corp	death	k oar p	Quas	illusion	kw ah ss
Des	down	d eh ss	Rel	change	r eh l
Ex	freedom	x	Sanct	protection	s aa ng kt
Flam	flame	fl ah m	Tym	time	t ih m
Grav	energy	gr ah v	Uus	up	oo ss
Hur	wind	h oo r	Vas	great	v ah ss
In	create	ih n	Wis	knowledge	w ee ss
Kal	invoke	k ah l	Xen	creature	z eh n
Lor	light	l oar	Ylem	matter	aye l eh m
Mani	life	m ah n ee	Zu	sleep	z oo

The Mixtures of Magic

Reagents are herbs needed for the preparation of magical mixtures. Most are sold in apothecaries; a few are hard to find and require special effort to obtain. Following is a chart of the magical reagents and the general areas of proficiency they affect.

Black Pearl

A rare version of the standard white pearl, a black pearl is a forceful reagent in the creation of kinesthetic magic, that is, projecting objects.

Projection

Blood Moss

Fungal growth usually found in deep forests and warm, damp areas; especially favored as a reagent for its ability to enhance mobility.

Movement

Garlic

Ubiquitous and strong-scented reagent, used effectively in warding off evil spirits.

Warding

Ginseng

Ancient reagent used extensively in healing.

Healing

Mandrake Root

Very rare and usually expensive magical herb growing only in swampy areas, mandrake root is said to bring great power to magic that uses it.

Power

Nightshade

Poison, Illusion

Rare, poisonous plant that appears only when the moons are in a certain conjunction. Those who learn its whereabouts and manage to be there in the dead of night when the moons are full can pick nightshade without danger and benefit from its powerful ability as a reagent to create illusions.

Spider Silk

Binding

The magical product of the garden spider and its relatives has no peer in its ability to bind. As a reagent mixed for magic, spider silk magnifies its binding power many times over.

Sulphurous Ash

Energy

Common material left by volcanic action, ash is an excellent source of energy in magical mixtures.

The Spells

Spells diverge greatly in terms of difficulty, and, correspondingly, in terms of danger to the caster. After years of observation and experimentation, scholars in magic have classified spells into eight circles of difficulty. Thus, mages who can command only the simplest spells are considered to be of the first circle, and so on.

Full mages' magical ability is directly related to their intelligence. Bards appear to have half the magical ability of full mages and fighters rarely have any. Casting spells drains magical powers, limiting how many spells mages can cast before resting. A spell will drain magical powers in amounts proportional to the spell's circle of difficulty.

On the facing page, a chart classifies the spells by circle, with a brief indication of each spell's use, a note on when it can be used, and an ingredient list. Do not take the ingredient lists to be recipes, as wrong quantities or careless mixing could have terrible results.

Note that not all spells can be used in all situations. Quite a few spells need far too much time or concentration to be cast during combat; others feed on the energies present in the battle arena.

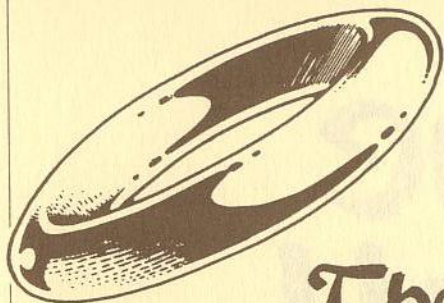
Full descriptions of each spell's nature, use, and effects follow.

In the following chart, dng./com. signifies the spell works in both dungeons and combat.

Chart of Spells

	Spell	Effect	Time	Reagents
1st Circle	An Nox An Zu Grav Por In Lor Mani	cure poison awaken magical missile light heal	anytime combat combat noncombat anytime	ginseng, garlic ginseng, garlic ash, pearl ash ginseng, silk
2nd Circle	An Sanct An Xen Corp In Wis Kal Xen Rel Hur	unlock repel undead locate call animal wind change	anytime combat noncombat combat noncombat	ash, moss garlic, ash nightshade silk, mandrake ash, moss
3rd Circle	In Flam Grav In Nox Grav In Por In Zu Grav Vas Flam Vas Lor	wall of fire wall of poison blink wall of sleep ball of flames great light	dng./com. dng./com. anytime dng./com. combat noncombat	pearl, ash, silk nightshade, silk, pearl silk, moss ginseng, silk, pearl ash, pearl ash, mandrake
4th Circle	An Grav Des Por In Sanct In Sanct Grav Uus Por Wis Quas	dispell field downward move protection protection field upward move reveal	anytime dungeon anytime dng./com. dungeon combat	pearl, ash moss, silk ash, ginseng, garlic mandrake, silk, pearl moss, silk silk, nightshade
5th Circle	An Ex Por In Bet Xen In Ex Por In Zu Rel Tym Vas Mani	magic lock insect swarm magic unlock sleep quickness great heal	anytime combat anytime combat combat noncombat	ash, moss, garlic moss, silk, ash ash, moss ginseng, nightshade, silk ash, mandrake, moss ginseng, silk, mandrake
6th Circle	An Xen Ex In An In Vas Por Ylem Quas An Wis Wis An Ylem	charm negate magic tremor confuse xray	combat anytime combat combat noncombat	pearl, nightshade, silk garlic, mandrake, ash moss, ash, mandrake mandrake, nightshade mandrake, ash
7th Circle	In Nox Hur In Quas Corp In Quas Wis In Quas Xen Sanct Lor Xen Corp	poison wind fear peer clone invisibility kill	combat combat noncombat combat combat combat	nightshade, ash, moss nightshade, mandrake, garlic nightshade, mandrake mandrake, silk, moss, ginseng, ash, nightshade mandrake, nightshade, moss pearl, nightshade
8th Circle	An Tym In Flam Hur In Mani Corp In Vas Grav Corp Kal Xen Corp Vas Rel Por	time stop flame wind resurrect cone of energy summon gate travel	anytime combat noncombat combat combat noncombat	mandrake, garlic, moss ash, moss, mandrake garlic, ginseng, silk, ash, moss, mandrake mandrake, nightshade, ash mandrake, garlic, moss, silk ash, pearl, mandrake

The Spell Book of the Eight Circles



The First Circle

An Nox

Few deadly problems are as easy to arrest as poison. So common is the use of poison that alchemists have been able to devise a formula, using the relatively common plants garlic and ginseng, that is effective against nearly every form of poison in nearly every user. However, the magic works on individuals only; thus, simple as it is, novice mages in a party must have magic endurance among them great enough to cast An Nox as many times as they have afflicted members, or someone may be left with life seeping away. Even then, safety is not secured. Strength already sapped by toxins is not regained without peaceful rest or healing magic.

An Zu

An Zu, which requires a simple mixture of ginseng and garlic, is used to awaken sleeping comrades. An Zu has limitations: it works only on members of the caster's party, it awakens only one person per casting, and it has no lasting preventative effect.

Grav Por

A novice magic user had best count on a good solid weapon in battle. A good spell for novices to practice, not rely on, in battle, is Grav Por, which casts a missile of energy at a target on the battlefield. If the

Negate Poison

Negate Sleep

Energy Movement

caster's mental powers exceed the foe's, small damage will be inflicted.

Grav Por requires sulphurous ash for energy and black pearl to project it. This spell has little effect for novices, not because of weak ingredients, but because of inexperience.

In Lor

Create Light

This simple spell creates a pool of light. Although of short duration, In Lor creates a brighter light than the best of torches. Note, however, that In Lor cannot be used in place of real flame to enhance the mixing of reagents for spells, for its properties are quite different.

In Lor's sole ingredient is sulphurous ash powder. Place that powder upon the object intended as the light source; rub it rhythmically while chanting "In Lor." Almost instantly, the object will blaze with white light.

Mani

Life

Mani is the simplest healing spell. Mani does not cure patients, but it does make them feel better and may take them out of immediate danger. Mani is useful even to higher circle magicians, because it is simple enough to cast during combat.

Spider silk and ginseng are the components needed for Mani. No special conditions are necessary during mixing or casting.



The Second Circle

An Sanct

Many evil creatures carry chests full of treasure and useful items, often the result of thievery against some other good Britannian. No good person begrudges the vanquisher a monster's gold and goods.

But evil creatures often arm their chests with deadly traps. Popular chest traps are acid sprays, poison fumes, bombs, and gaseous atmospheres. The first two are designed with intent to destroy the individual tampering with the lock. The last two affect the entire area of the chest and injure anyone in that area.

An Sanct uses blood moss and sulphurous ash to seep into hidden traps and render them impotent. The spell also negates any nonmagical locks in the chest. The same spell may be used to unlock doors locked by mechanical keys.

An Xen Corp

The powers of evil revel in their ability to command the uneasy dead. Rotted corpses and corrupted spirits, given motion and a semblance of life, are set on the mindless destruction of everything good.

Such phantoms are not living but are merely animated. They act mindlessly, unaware of their own horrible state. By negating their armour of mindlessness, An Xen Corp causes most risen dead to flee in lurching terror.

An Xen Corp is not a difficult spell, especially for casters of good intellect. Nor is its mixture difficult: ordinary amounts of common garlic and sulphurous ash must be mixed while pronouncing words of reverence for life and beauty.

Negate Protection

In Wis

In Wis performs the job of a navigator, determining one's precise location in terms of the recently devised concepts of latitude and longitude. Nightshade is its only ingredient, but that nightshade must be encased in glass and kept alive with dew drops until its use is required.

Kal Xen

Beginning mages often find their responsibility onerous, with an entire group of adventurers relying on their meager magical skills for protection and assistance in difficult situations. These novice mages may quickly and frequently turn to Kal Xen to add to the offensive ranks of their party in battle.

Kal Xen summons small nasty creatures such as rats and snakes to help in combat. Nasty or not, these summoned beasts are always loyal to the caster, and often direct a foe's attention away from members of the mage's party.

Mix mandrake root with spider silk to ensure the beast's loyalty. The locale where the mandrake root is gathered influences what type of creature is summoned.

Rel Hur

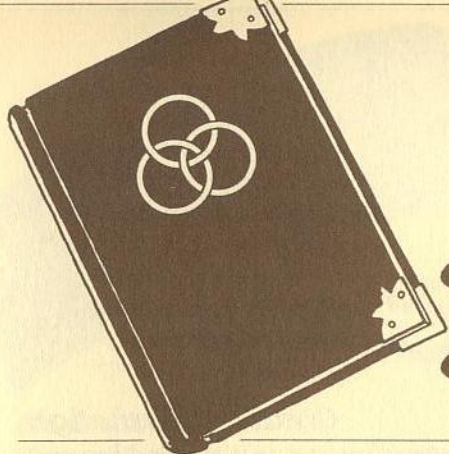
Those who love the open sea will find frequent use for Rel Hur. This powerful spell can redirect the wind for a time.

To mix Rel Hur, line a board with damp blood moss and set the board against a tree or mast. Study the wind and find the exact spot in which to stand so that sulphurous ash thrown into the air will be caught by the wind and flung against the blood moss. Complete the spell by blowing in the direction the wind should follow.

Create Knowledge

Summon Creature

Change Wind



The Third Circle

In Flam Grav

Create Flame Energy

One of three energy field spells, alike except for the nature of the horrors they create, In Flam Grav causes the particular spot indicated by the caster to erupt into red hot flames. Any creature on that spot or that steps into that spot is seared by a wall of flame. Be careful not to direct this spell too close to friends or they shall suffer the same as foes.

Sulphurous ash and black pearl project the burning fire to the chosen spot; spider silk holds it there a short while. The mix works best when blended over a flame.

In Nox Grav

Create Poison Energy

Another of the three energy field spells, In Nox Grav causes a cloud of nauseating poison to occur in the location indicated. Any creatures entering the cloud suffer some degree of poisoning. Like In Flam Grav, this spell can be just as effective in harming friends as enemies, so use care.

That rare but deadly poison, nightshade, is required for In Nox Grav. Add to the nightshade spider silk to shape the cloud, and a black pearl to direct its placement.

In Por

Create Movement

In Por teleports an entire party a fair distance in any specified direction. However, incanting this spell during the haste of battle will diminish its effects. It will only remove the caster, and then only to another place on the field of battle.

In Por will not transport a party if there is no clear, grassy spot to which the party can be moved. Nor will In Por work in dungeons or in townes, as its energies require a fair bit of open space to operate.

The dust for In Por consists of spider silk and fresh young blood moss. The caster must close his eyes and conjure a vision of the current

position after the party has left. In a wink, the party will be elsewhere and the vision, reality.

In Zu Grav

Create Sleep Energy

Least damaging of the three energy field spells, In Zu Grav is often the most effective. The spell cloaks a foe in a purple haze that puts it instantly to sleep, taking it out of the fight, rendering it helpless.

Like the other two similar spells, In Zu Grav can affect friends as easily as enemies. While sleep will not directly harm friends, falling asleep on the field of battle can be deadly.

In Zu Grav is easily mixed of common ginseng, spider silk, and black pearl. For best results, add the air of many yawns and sand from sleepy eyes.

Vas Flam

Great Flame

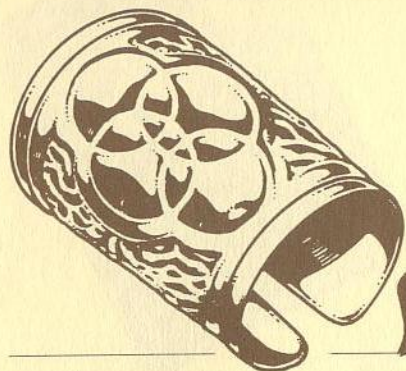
Vas Flam effectively gathers a great ball of flame, which may then be hurled at a foe. A simple spell, the great advantage of Vas Flam is that, aimed accurately, it will surely hit its mark and, just as surely, inflict damage.

Combine common sulphurous ash and a single black pearl over a hot flame. When the ash has adhered well to the pearl, remove it and store it until needed. Cast the talisman at a foe while uttering "Vas Flam" and a great flaming ball will smite him.

Vas Lor

Great Light

Vas Lor conjures a great light. This light is equivalent to In Lor's in quality and range, but Vas Lor lasts much longer than the beginner's spell. Its endurance comes from rare mandrake root. Mix the prepared root with sulphurous ash and proceed as if making In Lor.



The Fourth Circle

An Grav

Adventuring parties are sometimes prevented from pursuing their objective by obstructing or noxious fields. An Grav removes the obstructing field by negating the field's energy.

Ash countermines the field's energy; a black pearl thrusts the negating energy in the direction indicated by the spell caster. The obstructing field is instantly dispersed.

Des Por Uus Por

Magic users often travel with courageous groups, and courageous groups often find themselves in danger. When problems occur within dungeons, it is sometimes helpful to use Des Por and its complement Uus Por for moving among floors. Only effective when going from empty corridor to empty corridor, Des Por transports an entire group to the exact same location one floor lower. Uus Por works in reverse, and transports upward. Unfortunately, these spells take too long to intone during the heat of battle.

Blood moss provides the motion and spider silk keeps the party together during the transport.

In Sanct

Sometimes young questers join in battles beyond their might. In Sanct helps balance the fight by creating a protective shield around each party member.

Negate Energy

Downward Movement Upward Movement

Create Protection

In Sanct works only during combat and does not last long, so knights should be sure to hit hard and fast while the iron is doubled.

In Sanct is most effective when sulphurous ash, fast-working ginseng, and reeking garlic are mixed by the mage and the group's strongest fighter, simultaneously.

In Sanct Grav

In Sanct Grav's protective energy provides a strong defense. Its shimmering blueness cannot be entered or passed through. An excellent recourse when a few moments of safety are required, In Sanct Grav is well used to block dungeon corridors fully.

Mandrake root is necessary for In Sanct Grav; choose older, tougher specimens for this concoction. Add spider silk to make it impenetrable and pearl for placement.

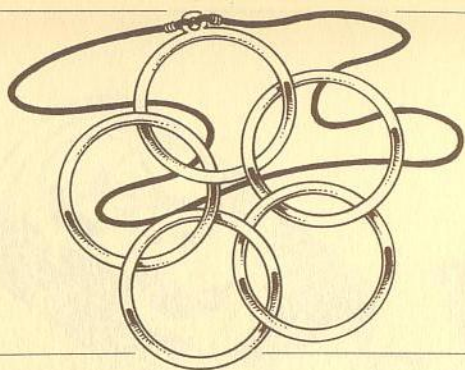
Wis Quas

Wis Quas strips illusion from creatures hidden by the cloak of invisibility, instantly revealing their positions.

Nightshade cut many times to form a paperlike sheet, then carved into lace, is secured by spider silk. It is glazed, dried in the sun, and then crystallized into a shiny powder that must be tossed in the sky over the field of battle as the spell is cast.

Create Protective Energy

Knowledge of Illusion



The Fifth Circle

An Ex Por

Negate Freedom of Movement

The magical locking of doors works in nearly every situation. Even normal locks can be transformed to magical locks by means of this spell. Thus the very creature who initially locked a door with its own key may be forbidden access.

Mix ash and moss, gathered from darkest glens under heavy clouds, into a strong garlic paste. While mixing, sing a melody that no other creature has ever heard. For greatest security, the melody should be different each mixing; so each magical lock will require a subtly different magical key, and anyone trying to break the magical lock will not be able to use any previously discovered keys.

In Bet Xen

Create Small Creature

This combat spell creates a powerful ally by calling up four swarms of small but deadly insects. All four swarms are generated in the same location. However, each can be commanded to move independently and on its own turn. Quartets of insect swarms generated by In Bet Xen have been known to surround and suffocate an enemy by their very number.

The powder for In Bet Xen consists of sulphurous ash to give life energy, blood moss to set them swarming, and spider silk to bind the swarm in obedience. For deadliest results, blend with stagnant water from the dankest swamp.

In Ex Por

Create Freedom of Movement

This powerful spell can open magical locks. The power of In Ex Por is that it first analyzes the lock to be broken and then actually produces the precise tool or magical potion that will break the lock.

The success of this spell comes from combining ash and moss in isolation, in complete darkness.

In Zu

Create Sleep

The first mass effect spell the developing magician learns, In Zu causes the scent of poppies to emanate from the caster in an ever-widening

wedge, dropping into a sound sleep all those touched by it. Only the toughest minds and wills may deny it.

Nightshade, gathered when high tide coincides with a moonless midnight, must be mixed with ocean ginseng and spider silk. Moisten with brine and add sand to mix thoroughly. Lay to dry in bright moonlight. Note that this spell is just as effective on friend as foe; aim carefully.

Rel Tym

Change Time

Rel Tym doubles a party's speed, anytime, anywhere. It is especially effective in battle, when a party's members can return two blows for each of the enemies' blows. It is also effective in surveillance, when being caught could be disastrous.

Sulphurous ash provides energy, blood moss creates movement, and mandrake root provides the magical power required for this incantation.

Vas Mani

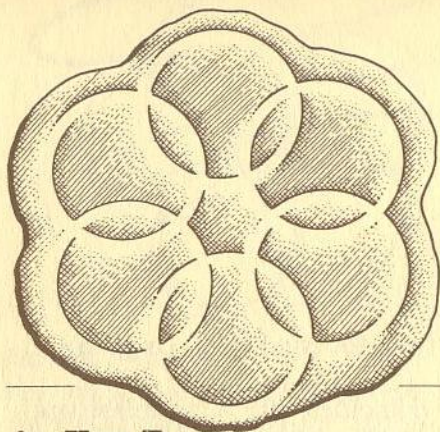
Great Life

Whole health restored; full vitality given: such is the nature of Vas Mani. A miraculous spell requiring concentration and vast knowledge of anatomy, Vas Mani is reserved for experienced mages.

Vas Mani fully restores patients from combat wounds. While it provides neither antidote to poison nor cure for disease, Vas Mani does heal all damage wrought by these ravagers, ensuring survival until a cure can be found.

The difficulty in preparing Vas Mani is in locating the mandrake root; otherwise the preparation is straightforward: mix the mandrake root with ginseng and spider silk.

To cast Vas Mani successfully, the caster must concentrate totally on the the subject to be healed. When the concentration is full, one can actually see wounds heal. Because the healing process can take several hours, Vas Mani cannot be used during combat.



The Sixth Circle

An Xen Ex

Negate a Creature's Freedom

A most effective tactic to use against enemies is to charm members of their party to work against them. However, this spell is most difficult to apply where it could be of the most help, against the most diabolical of foes, those of superior intelligence.

Control of a charmed individual is limited to fighting and moving; it does not extend to use of magic or special forms of attack. This spell can also be used to bring back party members after they have been charmed by a foe.

An Xen Ex requires a careful mixture of nightshade, to poison the mind; a black pearl, for projection; and spider silk, to bind loyalty.

In An

Create Negation

In An creates an air of magical negation. Spells fizzle when In An is in effect and neither side in combat can use magic for several rounds.

First, mandrake root must be gathered; the root must be rubbed with garlic and wrapped in a damp, black cloth for several hours. At midnight it must be pulverized and mixed with sulphurous ash. The mixture must be dried on a parchment and the parchment then folded into a tricorn. In casting the spell, a hole must be cut in the tricorn and the mixture dispensed from this in a wide arc.

In Vas Por Ylem

Create a Great Movement of Matter

In Vas Por Ylem is a terrifying spell that can generate a massive earthquake. While it reaches every enemy in combat, even if lurking in distant corners or behind mountains, the magical earthquake leaves allies

unshaken and unharmed.

Seek mandrake root that has grown unobstructed, so that its form is strong yet fibrous. Grind it with sulphurous ash and blood moss until no ingredient can be distinguished from another.

Quas An Wis

Illusion of Negated Knowledge

Quas An Wis turns a foe's orderly, well planned attack into bedlam. Confusion reigns and creatures strike out at whomever is nearest, regardless of loyalty. Extremely effective against the likes of rats and orcs, Quas An Wis loses much of its impact against more intelligent monsters, which are often capable of recognizing and resisting it.

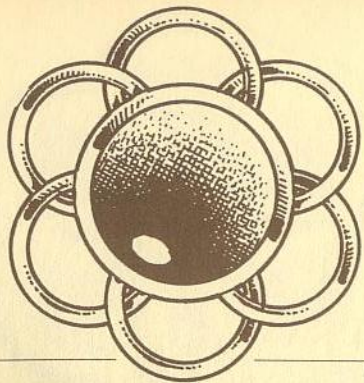
A mix of rare mandrake root and nightshade, the cloud of Quas An Wis works only for experienced mages.

Wis An Ylem

Knowledge of Negated Matter

Adept magicians are relied upon, not only to aid in battle and to repair wounds, but to guide their party wisely. Wis An Ylem provides the necessary insight by making the hidden, apparent. For an instant, the caster may see through the densest forest, the tallest mountain, the most solid rock. No wall can be too thick, no door too heavy, and no night too dark.

Requiring intensity of concentration, Wis An Ylem cannot be maintained for more than a flash of time. Thick, mature mandrake root must be combined with sulphurous ash in clear rain water. Boil the mixture until it becomes steam and capture the steam in a small glass box. Open the box as the spell is uttered.



The Seventh Circle

In Nox Hur

Create a Poison Wind

A cone of poisonous wind emanates from the hands of an agile wizard when In Nox Hur is cast, widening as it moves forward and sickening all in its path—friend or foe. Quite effective against many kinds of creatures, In Nox Hur is dangerous to use since the slightest error can destroy comrades as well as foes. Only the most dextrous should attempt it.

Nightshade is required, in great quantity, along with blood moss, thoroughly crushed, and sulphurous ash, as dry as possible.

In Quas Corp

Create an Illusion of Death

Illusion is a dangerous tool and In Quas Corp creates a powerful illusion. Suddenly, in the eyes of all creatures not intelligent enough to recognize the illusion, each party member may be made to appear as a twelve-foot giant, with a sword like a guillotine and a staff like a tree trunk. Fear strikes foes to the cores of their beings. They shriek and flee.

In Quas Corp is expensive. The dust that must fill the atmosphere as the spell is cast contains both powerful mandrake root and hallucinogenic nightshade. Simple garlic adds to the distastefulness of the experience for the foe.

In Quas Wis

Create an Illusion for Knowledge

Travelers in Britannia tell of magical gems that transport the vision of one gazing into their depths to a viewpoint thousands of feet above the land, like that of an eagle suspended in flight. It is illusion and reality. The change of viewpoint is illusion, but the knowledge provided is real. Powerful mages can replicate these miraculous effects through magic.

In Quas Wis requires only two ingredients to create its illusion. Only the most powerful mandrake root will work for this spell; and only the most convoluted stems of nightshade. Mix the two in dark of night with

seven drops of ice cold spring water. Let the moisture evaporate, then place the shimmering powder in a cloth sack.

When intoning In Quas Wis, cast the powder high to view the world about as if from the air. If cast within a town, building, or dungeon, all the detail of that level will be revealed.

In Quas Xen

Create an Illusionary Creature

Another powerful combat spell is In Quas Xen. By means of illusion, this spell duplicates friend or foe, in every detail. Although the new creature is an illusion, it fights, bleeds, cares, exactly as its original.

When a friend is cloned, the original and duplicate are still joined. Injury to each is felt by the other, death to one destroys the other. Yet the two are physically separate; they have independent turns in battle and may work together to vanquish a foe.

When a hostile creature is duplicated, no connection between copy and original seems to remain. Pain to a monster's clone is not felt by the monster; and death of the creature does not remove the clone.

The power of mandrake root is essential to this spell; as are the illusionary properties of nightshade. To mature root add spider silk to bind and ginseng to heal; mix with the living energy of sulphurous ash and add blood moss for animation.

When casting the spell, fling the glittering sand that results into the air. The wind will catch the granules, and where the first one touches earth, there shall the clone arise.

Sanct Lor

Protect from Light

Sanct Lor affects the path of light, bending it around the caster, so it may continue on. The result is the illusion that the caster is not there.

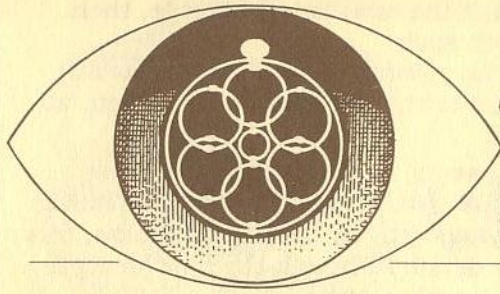
Mix mandrake root and nightshade picked in absolute darkness with blood moss to bend the light. It is essential that, while intoning this spell, none see any indication of its casting. Speak without moving lips.

Xen Corp

Creature Death

Regardless of the strength, size, or endurance of a foe, Xen Corp will overcome it. Only a creature with intelligence capable of greater concentration than that used in the casting, and capable of recognizing the intent before the spell is completed, has a chance of escaping death when assailed by Xen Corp.

Mix nightshade that has never seen light with the blackest pearl. Pour the powder into a small lead capsule and seal with black wax. While intoning the spell, hurl the capsule at the foe selected for destruction.



The Eighth Circle

An Tym

Negate Time

Perhaps the most difficult of spells, An Tym appears to stop time itself. For eons, scholars of thaumaturgy have tried to learn the secret of controlling the universe, and the more they discovered, the more convinced they became that they could never control this power even if they understood it. It is a tribute to the brilliance and creativity of Britannian minds that experts, undaunted by their failures, simply turned the problem around and found a way to achieve every advantage of briefly controlling time without actually controlling it at all.

Those capable of this spell will witness their foes paralyzed in midmotion. After a few moments, all returns to normal, just as though time had actually stopped and started up again. However, the caster's party remains active throughout the spell.

An Tym requires a mixture of mandrake root, well preserved blood moss, and a garlic clove.

In Flam Hur

Create A Flame Wind

In Flam Hur causes the wind itself to catch fire and devastate all in its path. Those who intone this spell can direct the flaming wind in a deadly spreading wedge. All creatures in the path of this wedge are severely burned; few ever survive. Careless misdirection of In Flam Hur over one's own companions may result in their deaths as well.

Sulphurous ash, blood moss, and mandrake root combine best for this spell in an iron cauldron over great heat.

In Mani Corp

Create Life from Death

There are many rewards for hard work and concentrated practice. For practiced wizards, having attained the eighth circle, there is the reward of being able to reverse death itself. Resurrection requires such total concentration and peace of mind that it should never be attempted on the harried field of battle.

To mix, place a mandrake root in a sieve in a fresh water spring on a sunlit day. One by one, add garlic, to keep away ills and evil, spider silk for binding the life forces together, ginseng for healing, sulphurous

ash for the spark of life, and blood moss to animate the spirit.

Remove the sieve from the spring and let the mixture dry. A small crystal will form from the drying mass. To revive a companion, place the crystal on the friend's forehead and intone In Mani Corp. The resurrected person will be weak and in need of further assistance.

In Vas Grav Corp

Create a Great Energy of Death

In Vas Grav Corp is the most powerful instrument of death yet devised. This spell lays waste to every living creature in its path unless the creature be exempt from the natural laws of this world or be of strong enough intellect to resist the spell.

Mandrake root must be gathered on a dark night during a lightning storm. It must be marinated in slime from stagnant mosquito fens and wrapped in nightshade, which must have been picked at midnight in total darkness. This package should be rolled in sulphurous ash and left on a grave overnight. If it is not discovered, it is ready to be dried into stringy dreadlocks of death.

Kal Xen Corp

Call a Creature of Death

Kal Xen Corp resembles Kal Xen, but its summons has far greater complexity and power. Kal Xen Corp calls forth a daemon. But only an experienced wizard is able to devote the concentration needed to bind the daemon's allegiance and prevent it from turning on his party. Then, although the daemon cannot use its own powers of possession, it can hurl great balls of fire across long distances to smite foes.

Mandrake root, gathered as near as possible to entrances to dungeons, pits, and other vile holes, is the base of this spell. Add garlic, blood moss, and the strongest spider silk. Meld the lot together letting the moisture of the root act as a binding. Now shape the mixture into the form of the winged daemon. Raise the icon to the sky, intone this spell, and hear it calling its own.

Vas Rel Por

Gate Travel

A moongate traveler cannot rely on magic alone. The knowledge of the influence of the moon's phases is also required. Take a black pearl and shine it well. Bury the pearl in a clean piece of mandrake root. Sprinkle the whole with sulphurous ash and expose the conglomeration to the moons during one night. In morning it will be a fine silver powder.

To travel, cast the powder in the direction of the gate to be reached while speaking the name of that gate's town followed by "Vas Rel Por." Immediately drop to the ground and meditate on the proper phases of the moon for that gate. Instantly, the party will be there.

Editor's Note

Between the time this volume originally went to press and the time galleys arrived for final alterations, Lord British was lost while on an expedition to explore the newly discovered underworld. Days before we were to print, Lord Blackthorn declared martial law to deal with the general unrest in the wake of British's disappearance. The Ethics section of this book has been added to reflect the new measures imposed by Blackthorn.

Ethics

The Ethics of Britannia, or the accepted measure of proper behavior, were long based on the Way of the Avatar. As time progressed, the lessons of this historic tale came to be interpreted in many ways. In fact, many people interpreted the Way of the Avatar in ways that wouldn't require them to strive to uphold these virtues.

Now, Lord Blackthorn, acting king of all Britannia, has enacted a Code of Virtue that leaves no room for misinterpretation.

1. Thou shalt not lie, or thou shalt lose thy tongue.
2. Thou shalt help those in need, or thou shalt suffer the same need.
3. Thou shalt fight to the death if challenged, or thou shalt be banished as a coward.
4. Thou shalt confess to thy crime and suffer its just punishment, or thou shalt be put to death.
5. Thou shalt donate half of thy income to charity, or thou shalt have no income.
6. If thou dost lose thine own honor, thou shalt take thine own life.
7. Thou shalt enforce the laws of virtue, or thou shalt die as a heretic.
8. Thou shalt humble thyself to thy superiors, or thou shalt suffer their wrath.

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